

SUITS DON'T EVEN FIT THEIR ADS.

To Say Nothing of Fitting Men For Whom They Are Made.

Ritchie & Cornell Claim Too Much and Give Too Little—Investigation Made at Tailor's Request Was Elaborately Unprejudiced and Absolutely Decisive—Five Suits with but a Single Fit—Which Does Not Fit The Tribune.

By SAMUEL HOPKINS ADAMS.

Q—Can ten-dollar bills be bought for seven dollars and seventy-five cents?
A—They can not.
Q—Are half-dollars in sound condition purchasable at three-fifths of their face value?
A—They are not.
Q—Do merchants sell twenty-five dollars worth of clothing for fifteen dollars?
A—They do not.

In this brief catechism for bargain hunters lies the gist of an old truism which this department has been preaching anew. The three questions are substantially the same. The three answers are substantially the same. The reasons are precisely the same. They amount to this, that you can't get something for nothing.

In support of this simple theory I produce as witness Mr. John W. Ritchie, of the firm of Ritchie & Cornell, "the World's Largest Tailors," in the words of their own modest claim, notable examples of that black magic of newspaper advertising which presto-changes a twenty-five dollar value into a fourteen-dollar-and-seventy-five-cent price, or even less.

Early in The Tribune's campaign I ran across Messrs. Ritchie & Cornell, and said my say about them with details displeasing to their trade susceptibilities.

They were then doing an extensive business through a chain of tailoring establishments, by means of wide-flung advertisements which made just about every claim within the bounds of credibility and a number outside. They are now carrying on their business in ten New York stores, five Brooklyn stores and two Newark stores, as may be observed by careful students of the Journal and the Telegram. Through those chosen sheets they announce in able-bodied type, with enticing illustrations:

"Real \$25 value Suits, \$14.75, made to measure."
"Formerly \$18, \$20, \$22, \$25 values: \$12.75."
"Overcoats, real \$25 value: \$10.00."
"Get a Custom Made Fit, not a Ready Made Misfit."
"The World's Largest Tailors—Watch Us Grow."
"We guarantee you more for less money than any other clothing concern in the world."

This was the general type of advertising which had inspired my original criticism of the firm. Whatever resentment they may have felt they kept to themselves at that time. But later it came to the attention of The Tribune that the head of the tailoring firm believed himself and his concern to have been misunderstood, and even cherished the theory that if the Ritchie & Cornell business methods had been "properly investigated" by The Tribune, they would have been found worthy not of denunciation in my department, but of exploitation in the regular advertising columns of this paper. (It is a singular and saddening fact, by the way, that every object of The Tribune's criticisms assumes them to have been made without "proper investigation," not at all concerning himself to discover what processes of purchase, analysis and appraisal go to the making of an article in this department.) Mr. Ritchie's theory sounded interesting. He was invited to call and expound it.

Thus it was that, early in the present year, there appeared in The Tribune office a face long familiar to us of the Bureau of Investigations through the medium of yellow print and pink, the shrewd, keen, alert Yankee face of Mr. John W. Ritchie. With physiognomy I have little concern, yet it may not be amiss to say that Mr. Ritchie looks honest, as he probably is, in his private relationships, despite an unsatisfactory bankruptcy record. He further commended himself to The Tribune's sense of the fitness of things in that he neither whined nor scolded. He was there for a purpose. He would put it to us straight. We had Ritchie & Cornell wrong. Our attack upon them was based upon misinformation. It was all a mistake; an honest mistake on our part, very likely, but one that we could not afford to repeat or continue in justice to our own readers.

"You're not playing fair with your own public when you keep them out of my store," was his proposition.

"On the contrary, Mr. Ritchie," replied The Tribune representative, "from what we know of your methods we believe that we save the public money by warning them against you."

"I don't know where you get it," responded Mr. Ritchie, earnestly. "What do you expect us to sell? Sixty-dollar clothes for fourteen seventy-five!"

He was informed that The Tribune had long since been disillusioned of any such golden expectations, but that it expected the firm to live up to its representations of twenty-five dollar clothes for fourteen-seventy-five or less, as it flamboyantly advertised, or else be classed in the category of fakery.

"As to the ads," said Mr. Ritchie, with smiling frankness, "I don't pretend that the style of 'em is up to The Tribune standard. But we've got the goods."

"Then why not adapt your advertising to your wares?"

"Just what I'm getting at. If I can prove to you that our fabrics represent the best values ever given for the money, and that our finished clothing gives extraordinary values for any one who wants low-priced clothes, and if we keep our advertising down level with the facts, why can't we advertise in The Tribune?"

Now, it is no part of this paper's theory of trade that because a firm has once been found guilty of improper practices and exposed here, it is forever under the ban. Some of the leading exponents of business uprightness in the mercantile world would, if their advertising records were traced back far enough, have been fit subjects for very unpleasant criticism by any Bureau of Investigations which might have been in existence at that time. Avowed intention of reform is always worth consideration. Mr. Ritchie himself pointed out that their present advertising was no worse than the past advertising of some Tribune advertisers of to-day.

"We're moving forward to a better grade of business all the time," said he, "and you are only hampering a natural development when you roast us. We guarantee our clothes and refund money if they're not satisfactory."

"Even so," it was pointed out to him "The Tribune would not publish the type of copy which you use now."

"Of course not," he agreed. "You can supervise all our copy, and we'll cut out any claims that you think are excessive. Our slogan is 'Better values for \$14.75 than can be found anywhere else in the trade.' On that we can build up a successful advertising campaign that would be eligible for The Tribune columns."

Very good, Mr. Ritchie," said the representative of The Tribune management. "We are quite willing to accept your view, provided the most drastic investigation and analysis bear it out."

"That suits me. Only remember what you're investigating. You're investigating \$14.75 clothes, not fancy-priced Fifth avenue tailors."

Here he made his error, in that he stated only half the matter of investigation. We were to investigate \$14.75 clothes, it is true, but \$14.75 clothes repeatedly and urgently represented to be of \$25 value, and intended to be represented later in The Tribune as of quality unmatched elsewhere at the same or approximately the same price.

"One other point, Mr. Ritchie," said the representative of the management. "We are willing and ready to undertake this investigation and spend money on it. But it is to be understood that, whatever the findings may be, as to your product, we are at liberty to give them to the public in full."

For a moment the caller blinked. He had not, perhaps, foreseen this phase. But he was game.

"Yes," he said. "All right. I'm willing to stand by that."

Some time was allowed to elapse before the investigation was begun. Then, in order that there might be no danger of prejudice carried over from the former investigation of last year, an outside expert was employed to supervise the purchasing. Under his direction five men, acting quite independently of each other and of The Tribune, ordered a suit each at as many of the Ritchie & Cornell shops. Five different suits, it was judged, would afford a sufficient basis for judging of the merits of the unequalled values claimed. After fittings, try-ons and re-fittings, the suits were duly delivered. They were then turned over for analysis and appraisal to experts from another city, in order that the element of trade-rivalry which might impair expert judgment should not be present.

At the outset several points in favor of Ritchie & Cornell were scored. The customers had received courteous treatment. Complaints as to fit and requests for changes were promptly met. Finally, the fabrics were good, just as Mr. Ritchie had claimed; rather above than below the standard of \$15-suit clothes. Right there the score ceased to be plus for Ritchie & Cornell and shifted over to the minus side.

For, a suit of clothes is something besides cloth duly sewed together. A bag is cloth sewed together. And a man faring forth upon his business in a bag with suitable openings for head and feet might possibly avoid arrest, though he would hardly escape public derision of a sort painful to a sensitive temperament. But one does not go to a tailor for bags; he goes to a baggery. Ritchie & Cornell are tailors, or purport to be such (the appraisal on some of the clothes leaves the matter slightly dim), and they advertise superior clothing, not durable bags. Since they aspired to advertise superior clothing in The Tribune, which was the hopeful purpose of the investigation, it would be essential that they produce superior clothing. Of course, if they wished to advertise fine material in baggings, that would be another matter, but they have thus far expressed no such yearning. When they do we shall hire expert bag manufacturers; but in the meantime it is proper to note that fit and style are fully as important considerations in a suit of clothes as fabric, and that the average citizen would, for purposes of public appearance on Fifth Avenue or Broadway, prefer a suit of simple jute to a bag of sumptuous silk. So prone to the prejudice of custom is the human soul!

Now, I do not wish to be understood as asserting that the Ritchie & Cornell suits made for the investigating corps were bags. They bore the outward and visible appearance of garments constructed for masculine wear—coat, waistcoat, trousers—but by no means necessarily for the wear of the individual for whom they purported to be made. The first suit proved particularly interesting in the light of the Ritchie & Cornell catch-line:

"Get a Custom Made Fit—Not a Ready Made Misfit."

The coat was a good enough coat, considered dispassionately as an article to hang on a hanger. But when it came to be draped upon the human frame for which it was designed it exhibited peculiarities. To begin with, it was too big at the top button. Then the spacing of the buttons was apparently rule-of-the-thumb work by a person whose thumbs weren't mates. The sleeves were too short at the top, there was a surplus of undersleeve, the collar was low in the centre, the coat was too long-waisted and the shoulders were twisted. It was the kind of garment that might have been constructed by a correspondence-school tailor giving absent treatment to a patron he had never seen. There was nothing of the correspondence school about the buttons and buttonholes in the waistcoat, however! In fact, they failed to correspond at all! The trousers were in many respects good trousers. They would keep out the cold and they complied with the law. Barring the fact that they were low in the rise, had too much cloth in the hips and exhibited a twist in the left leg (to match the shoulder twist, perhaps), they would have been plenty good enough for a man who, for lack of any others, would have had to wear them or stay indoors.

Suit No. 2 was a bit too economical in certain respects, and though it averaged this up by over-generosity in others, the general result was not wholly satisfactory. For example, an extra allowance of waistcoat back does not altogether compensate for a pair of trousers too tight in the crotch and a coat pinched through the shoulders, short in the strap and with a sleeve short on top.

In general appearance the third suit was good, for a wearer who set pulchritude above comfort. If he posed just right, so as to take up an over-long back, a badly fitted shoulder and a pair of trousers too small in the crotch, he might get through the day without exciting the mirth of critical friends.

The fourth suit was unsatisfactory as to the coat, waistcoat and trousers, but some of the buttons were very nicely sewed on.

Three try-ons went to the completion of the last Ritchie & Cornell work of sartorial art. When it was all over the coat was still too tight in the shoulders and had one shoulder too low. "Hangs like a meal-bag," is the expert verdict. The sleeves were bad, but the waistcoat nobly bore out one claim of the Ritchie & Cornell advertising:

"We guarantee you more for less money than any other clothing concern."

There it was, that extra-generous allowance, right in the waistcoat. It wasn't very evenly balanced, but it was there. After the patron had been inclosed within the capacious folds there was room for him to invite in a friend—a thin friend, but still a friend—and make him at home. The trousers were rated "very poor," being out of keeping with the coat, of the old-fashioned

(Continued on page 14.)

ADVERTISEMENT.

Delivery Schedule:—
FREE—ALL PAID PURCHASES
ANYWHERE IN U. S.
FREE—ALL C. O. D. PURCHASES WITHIN 25 MILES.
FREE—ALL C. O. D. PURCHASES \$2.50 AND OVER ANYWHERE IN U. S.

ADVERTISEMENT.

HEARN
Fourteenth Street
West of Fifth Avenue

ADVERTISEMENT.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Babies' Days
APRIL 26 TO 29. SPECIAL VALUES INFANTS TO 6 YEAR SIZES.
Following Offerings for Monday and Tuesday

17TH ANNUAL HOUSEKEEPERS' WEEK!

SHEETS MUSLINS LINENS BLANKETS CURTAININGS RUGS
PILLOW CASES QUILTS TOWELS—TOWELINGS COMFORTABLES SHADES BUREAU SCARFS
SOAPS AND HOUSEHOLD NEEDFULS SILVERWARE CUTLERY

PRICE IS A MAGNET

When Backed by Large Assortments and HEARN Reliability

The Following Offerings Will Prove This Assertion:—

HANDSOME DRESSES FOR WOMEN, SMALL WOMEN, MISSES

Note our variety as well as our values. Colors are choicest obtainable and when matched with lace or net, their beauty is heightened as the dyeing has been faultlessly effected.

14.98—Sport and Dressy Dresses—Natural tint pongee in new Norfolk style having yoke and novelty buckle mounted belt. Dressy models are on new lines, some combining self-tinted chiffon smartly and effectively—excellent range of colors—faultlessly finished.
White Dresses—Satin, silks, chiffon cloth, also plain and embroidered—wonderful variety for all uses, from simple porch dresses to exquisitely dainty creations, suitable for brides and bridesmaids.
16.98—Afternoon Dresses—Georgette crepe in willow green, silver gray, navy, old blue or white—seven bias folds prettily corded trim the skirt—the same idea carries out a bolero effect on the well-trimmed blouse which has a prettily trimmed white vestee, collar and sleeve finish.
24.98—New Straight Model Dresses—Charmeuse in black, amethyst, sap- phire or green—the long, straight line bodice has sleeves and chemise of self-color chiffon, prettily tucked and shirred over a dainty camisole effect of contrasting color—the graceful skirt is slightly gathered at the top and finished with a milliner's fold at hem.
27.98—New Striped Taffeta Dresses—Most tasteful combinations of two light blue and shades of beige or with beige predominating—the draped skirt has stripes running crosswise and a foundation of chiffon cloth—the dainty blouse is an exquisite combination of both fabrics with white chiffon vestee and overcollar.
Other Handsome Dresses combining taffeta with chiffon cloth or self-color lace, at 20.98

Important Offering of Women's Muslin Underwear

Exceptional Purchases in Face of Extraordinary Conditions

Several manufacturers who cannot secure the laces and embroideries that they need to fill Summer orders closed out to us their entire stocks. Because of European conditions, prices of cotton and silk fabrics, laces, embroideries and even buttons are advancing steadily. Despite these facts, our Cash-Buying Power and Fore-handness have brought us the Exceptional Purchases. As a Consequence, these offerings are:

Women's Night Dresses—round, V or high neck—lace or emb'd trim—reg. 3968
Night Dresses—Nainsook, Batiste or soft finish Muslin—flesh or white—neatly or elaborately trim'd—reg. 3884
Daintiest Night Dresses—charmingly fashioned with most attractive laces, embroideries and other trimming touches—reg. \$1.69 1.24
Night Dresses—really beautiful effects in Yoke, Marguerite or Empire—majority trim'd in elaborate effect with laces, ribbons, etc.—value \$2.69 1.95
Finer, in assortments both active and dainty—Models that are sure to please combining several small lots—reg. \$3.98 and \$4.69 2.94
Women's Petticoats—ruffle of embroidery and tucks—reg. 59 45
Women's Petticoats—White or Flesh—Nainsook, Cambric or Batiste—variety of best liked styles—reg. \$1.2594
Petticoats—Exceptionally attractive showing of embroidery—trim'd—some very effective with laces and ribbon—reg. \$2.69 1.94
Petticoats—fine Nainsook—knee depth trimming of fish-eye val, with wide embroidery and ribbon—reg. \$3.98 2.95
Children's Drawers—emb'd trim'd—2 to 16 yrs.—reg. 4938
Cambric Night Drawers—1 to 12 yrs.—good quality—well made—reg. 5945
Children's Petticoats—Cambric—ruffles of fine embroidery or lace and two inserts—reg. 6948
Misses' Petticoats—Cambric and Nainsook—deep sounce attractively trim'd with fine embroidery or lace—reg. \$1.69 1.29
Children's Princess Slips—Blue, Pink or White—trim'd with lace in fancy effects—some have embroideries and ribbons—Special94
Finer Slips in Batiste, Nainsook or washable satin 79 to 3.98

10,000 Yards of Cretonnes

On sale tomorrow at 18 cts
36 Inches Wide—Elsewhere 25 to 32 Cents

Will be shown on several large tables in Upholstery Section—assortment comprises most attractive Verdure, Chintz, Scenic, Japanese, Birds, Black and White Stripes with overlay Rose patterns, Tapestry and other conventional designs—Cretonnes are truly the rage so many are the uses for them that a room is hardly complete without them.

ALSO, IN UPHOLSTERY SECTION,

A new departure in Sunfast Portieres—Madras designs—seagreens, old blues, wood tones and rose tints—Value \$3.98 2.98
Furniture or Drapery Repps—Myrtle, crimson, rose, blue, tan—double width—Special55
Sunfast Draperies—Special double width—detached figures or double borders—Value \$9 49
36-inch—Value 4939
Special Purchase
Curtain Strips.
Double borders, Jacquard designs, Colonial borders, crossbars and many other novel effects—Lot 1, Value 29 to 19
Lot 2, Value 39 to 29
Lot 3, Value 49 to 59
Unexcelled variety—Cream, White, Beige.
Slip Covers, Shades, Awnings and Upholstery Work
To Order
at Lowest Prices.
Guaranteed Workmanship.

All Housekeepers' Week Offerings Purchased during this Sale will be held and delivered at customer's convenience.

SOLID SILVER TABLE WARE

ANNUAL HOUSEKEEPERS' WEEK!

Solid Silver Dinner Forks—Colonial or Floral patterns—heavy weight—reg. \$10.49—1/2 dozen Sale 8.57
Dinner Knives to match—sterling handles—reg. \$10.98—1/2 dozen Sale 8.79
Sterling Silver Teaspoons—plain or fancy designs—bright or grey finish—reg. \$3.49 Sale 2.80
Carving Sets—3 Pc.—large size—sterling silver engraved handles—fine steel blades—reg. \$4.49 Sale 3.29
Serving Pieces—Sterling handles and silver plated blades, Pie or Cake Servers, Ice Cream Slicers, Cream Ladles and other articles—reg. 98 each Sale .67

CUTLERY

ANNUAL HOUSEKEEPERS' WEEK!

Steel Knives and Forks—hand forged steel—bone and ebony handles—set of six each—reg. \$1.49 Sale .95
G. Wostenholm's Carver and Fork—Sheffield steel—stag handles—reg. \$1.39 Sale 1.00
6 to 8 inch Shears—excellent steel—reg. 4935
Table Knives and Forks—fine American steel—celluloid handles—reg. 25c each Sale .22

MORNING SPECIALS—Monday and Tuesday, Until 1 P. M.

To prevent dealers buying, quantities restricted. No Mail or Telephone Orders.

\$21.98 Women's Spring Suits. 16.85
Poplins and serges—black, navy, rookies, also smart checks—prevailing styles in blouse and straight front effects—with flaring sides—button trim—overlay silk collar—finely tailored—all sizes.
WOMEN'S SUITS—SECOND FLOOR.
\$10.98 & \$12.98 Women's & Misses' Silk Petticoats—reg. 7.65
Crepe de Chines and Taffetas—fashionable shades of navy, Copenhagen, green, also black—many smart trim's touches—some with Georgette crepe sleeves—all sizes in lot.
WOMEN'S DRESSES—SECOND FLOOR.
\$1.98 China Silk Blouses 1.59
White or black—embroidered or tailored style, with hemstitched front—all sizes.
98 ct. Full Length Kimonos78
Lawn and voiles—pretty florals and dotted effects—straight, Empire and elastic belt models—large organdie collars and cuffs or contrast piping—sizes to 46.
HOUSE DRESSES—SECOND FLOOR.
98 ct. to \$1.49 Women's White Petticoats69
Regular and extra sizes—wide ruffles of emb'd or lace and inserts—cut full around bottom for wear with wide skirts—some light white—some white with black white.
MUSLIN UNDERWEAR—SECOND FLOOR.
29 ct. Women's Ex. Size Underwear 1.19
Vests—shaped—low neck—sleeveless or short sleeves—lace trim'd drawers.
KNIT UNDERWEAR—MAIN FLOOR.
39 ct. Silk-Mixed Crepe de Chine29
35-inch—soft, lustrous, in colors for day or evening—also black.
WASH DRESS FABRICS—BASEMENT.
15 ct. Dress Gingham11
32 and 36 inch mill lengths of good qualities—neat patterns and colors.
WASH DRESS FABRICS—BASEMENT.
89 ct. Shepherd Checks—54 inch53
Part wool—small and medium sizes—black and white.
At 53 cts. an unusual offering of one of the spring season's most popular fabrics at less than manufacturer's price.
DRESS GOODS—MAIN FLOOR.
\$1.25 Crepe de Chines—49 inch07
Fine crepe weave—assortment of colors for day or evening, also black.
SILKS—MAIN FLOOR.
93 ct. Towelings7
Dublin check—colored borders—for dish or roller.
TOWELINGS—MAIN FLOOR.
\$5.98 Chest of Silver 3.95
26 pieces—6 knives, 6 forks, 6 table, 4 tea spoons, sugar shell and butter knife—pretty designs.
SILVERWARE—MAIN FLOOR.
25 ct. Bleached Turkish Towels19
22x41—heavy absorbent—hemmed white Turkish borders—colored stripes.
TOWELS—MAIN FLOOR.
\$2.39 Silkoline Comfortables 1.77
Pretty floral patterns—wide asteen borders—full size.
COMFORTABLES—BASEMENT.
\$2.98 Marcellies Spreads 2.00
Satin finish—full size—good patterns.
SPREADS—BASEMENT.
13 1/2 & 15 ct. Lonsdale Cambric11
Nainsook or cambric finish—well known for durability.
WHITE GOODS—MAIN FLOOR.
\$5.98 Boys' Norfolk Suits 4.65
8 to 17 yrs.—Spring chevrons in smart checks, plaids, stripes and fancies—variety of models—fully lined trousers—many suits have an extra pair.
BOYS' CLOTHING—THIRD FLOOR.
19 ct. Men's Lisle Hosiery15
Black, white and colors—double heel and toe.
HOSIERY—MAIN FLOOR.

Clock Signs Denote Morning Specials.

Look for the Clocks!

Look for the Clocks!